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ABSTRACT

This article discusses the meaning of evaluation for teachers and students, reasons for evaluating students, and evaluative methods teachers might use. First, three principles of evaluation are presented: students should know the criteria for judging good and bad work; every student should have an opportunity to succeed at one type of evaluation; and students should receive immediate feedback. Next, the following five reasons for conducting evaluations are presented: (1) to diagnose student problems and skill levels; (2) to gather evidence for report cards; (3) to encourage students' self-improvement; (4) to report to parents about student progress; and (5) to tell students how much they already know. Next, ongoing formative evaluation is recommended to assure students that assignments are important and encourage them to take school work seriously. Dilemmas posed by constant evaluation are also considered. The next section suggests methods of: (1) assessing knowledge and comprehension though student-created review games and rap songs; (2) assessing the application of skills through student presentations and the preparation of job applications for historical or literary characters; (3) assessing higher-level thinking skills through student portfolios and student newspapers or newspaper articles; and (4) assessing critical thinking by allowing students to decide goals and become teachers. Next, journals, conferences, and presentations are discussed as other evaluation methods. Concluding comments advocate an expanded perception of evaluation. (AC)

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Valuing Students: Rethinking Evaluation

by Kathy Smith and Jim Parsons

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Valuing Students: Rethinking Evaluation

Introduction

What is evaluation? Evaluation is the way we find things out. When evaluation happens in schools, its purpose is to find things out about what happens in the classroom. Specifically, school evaluation exists so that teachers can find things out about the students and about themselves as teachers. The reason for evaluation is simple. Teachers evaluate because they want to know how they are doing, and they want to know how their students are doing. The purpose of this article is to briefly discuss what evaluation means for both teachers and students, why teachers evaluate, and some methods that teachers might use to evaluate.

Principles of Evaluation

Before we talk about the whats, whys, and hows of evaluation, we believe it is necessary to state some important principles of evaluation. These principles are hardly new, and they support many of the things teachers already know about students and their learning.

Principle One: Students should know the criteria for judging good or bad work.

The purpose of evaluation is to find things out that, as a teacher, you don't know. The purpose of evaluation is not to manipulate an evaluation to prove a point. Good evaluation is not tricky. It is honest. It is straightforward. And, it is clear.

Students should know and understand the criteria teachers use to judge what is good or bad, what is correct or incorrect, or what is successful or what is unsuccessful. During evaluation, the teacher does more than just short-term finding out; the teacher also provides information that tells students what is important and what is unimportant. This information may stay with students for the remainder of their lives. Structuring the information that students receive is a task not to be taken lightly.

Principle #2: Every student should have an opportunity to succeed at one type of evaluation you use as a teacher.

This principle is based on the belief that no two students have exactly the same abilities. Some can analyze better than others. Some can build a holistic picture, and some are better at focusing on the parts. Some do better on objective exams; some like to write.

The practical point is that, if teachers use only one evaluation tool, they may not be gaining an accurate insight into a student's knowledge. The teacher may hit the student's strength or may hit the student's weakness. Either way, what the teacher discovers is not a

reliable "measure" of the student's ability. Because students differ, we believe that teachers should use a variety of different evaluative tools.

Principle #3: Students should receive immediate feedback.

One of the most common complaints students make about teachers is that they hand in a paper, an assignment, or an exam and students don't see it again for weeks. Not only is this practice frustrating, but it does not encourage student motivation.

When students turn in work and don't get it back, there are only two things they can assume: (1) either the work is unimportant in the eyes of the teacher or (2) the teacher is lazy. Immediate feedback encourages and motivates. In addition, it is unfair for a teacher to demand assignments "on time," and then not return them "in time."

Teachers often fall into the problem of giving too many assignments and, by doing so, they make their own teaching (marking) job next to impossible. Eventually, because they are unable to turn assignments back to students quickly, the teacher ends up looking stupid; and, finally the teachers loses credibility with the class and can no longer place time demands on students' work. We encourage teachers, over and over again, not to give more assignments than they can realistically grade.

Question #1. Why do teachers evaluate?

There are many possible reasons to evaluate. Some of these reasons will probably be considered "honorable;" some may seem less than honorable. But, even the less than honorable reasons for conducting evaluations are still necessary. For the teacher working in a school situation, the important reasons for evaluating students include:

Reason #1: Diagnosis

Teaching is more than presenting facts and concepts from specific subject areas. If students are to learn on their own, which is a sign of intellectual maturity, they must possess the skills of learning -- basic skills like reading and writing, or specific skills like finding the main points and understanding the difference between fact and opinion. These skills enable students to work within the classroom and later as they live their lives. Most elementary teachers realize that school is more than learning the facts; many secondary teachers do not and focus only on the content. Students never lose their need to develop the skills of reading, writing, and researching. We will echo the comments of many teachers in the area of reading and writing. All teachers are teachers of reading and writing, regardless of the grade level they teach.

One reason that teachers evaluate is so that they might find out whether their students are able to understand the skills that they need in order to learn. Evaluation can diagnose whether students have learned the skills of learning -- things like reading, writing, and arithmetic. Evaluation can also help teachers know to what extent

students have learned these skills. And, if the teacher learns that their students have not learned these skills, a prescribed set of treatments is planned.

Obviously, the task of evaluation isn't always as clinical as formal diagnosis and prescription. Sometimes the teacher diagnoses intuitively, quickly deciding whether to go once more through a particular topic or whether to move on. The point of this note is to acknowledge that part of evaluation is the diagnosis of specific or general student skills and the creation of plans to overcome areas of deficiency in those skills.

Reason #2: Creating marks for a report card.

Creating marks for a report card may seem like one of the not so "honorable" reasons to evaluate. Still, it would be hard to imagine school without report cards. Report cards have become a formal and expected way the school communicates both with the students and the students' parents. Report cards are more than simple reporting mechanisms. They are the "Ghosts of Christmas Past" and "Christmas Yet-to-Come." They tell about the past and they outline the future. Because many students are not yet self-motivated, report cards are the encouragement some students need to motivate their work. Report cards can also serve as the motivation some parents need to take notice of what's happening in school and involve themselves in their child's education.

Because the report card serves so many different functions, creating grades for the report card is as much an art as it is an accounting. For example, no right-thinking teacher would base the entire report card grade on one evaluative test or quiz. Part of the skill of reporting grades is to make sure there are enough grades to give a broad and reliable picture of what the student has been doing during the class.

Furthermore, report cards are seldom ever as impersonal and objective as they seem to be from the outside. In fact, report cards can be one of the most powerful things that happens to students in school -- shaping their lives well beyond the classroom. For example, when Parsons was teaching grade seven, the counselor visited his classroom after school for a conversation about one of his students (Julia). Julia was a "free spirit," a wonderful young woman who couldn't remain quiet or stay on task for more than a few minutes. Sometimes she handed work in; sometimes she did not. Consequently, her report cards in all her subjects were less than average.

The counselor brought a disturbing message. Report cards were coming out later than week, and if Julia got a bad grade on her report card in Parsons' class her father was going to beat her up. The counselor was sure this wasn't just an idle threat. The teacher, in this case, faced a problem. Julia, by the measure of the account's tape, should have received a low grade. But, should the teacher, knowing what he knew, give Julia the grade she "deserved?" (Note: The result, by the way, was that the teacher created a sort of buy-now-pay-later plan and Julia received a higher grade than she would have. The point

of this story is not that teachers should give students grades they don't "deserve," but instead that creating grades for a report card is often a dilemma.)

Reason #3: Encouraging self-improvement.

Every student teachers have in their classes will be different. Although most of the school materials and curricula seem to assume that students are equal in all aspects, they are not. Some are gifted with the comforts of life; some have few comforts. Some are naturally more discerning than others. And some have talents in some areas, but not in others. However, regardless of a students' abilities, all students can learn and improve. Like the dated, named pencil marks on grandma's kitchen wall that show the change in heights of all the grandkids, students need to know they are progressing and growing in their abilities.

One important school event is that students create a story about their lives, with them as the main character. The teacher plays a main part in the construction of that story -- the storyteller. Some of the chapters in the student's story include "Am I a Success, or Not?" and "What Do Important Others Think of My Worth?" Obviously, there are a variety of storytellers in any child's life; but, one of the most important -- maybe, even, the most important -- is the teacher. The teacher is one person with the vested authority to pronounce a student capable or not capable, smart or stupid, worthy or unworthy. Every report card is a plot in the student's story; every evaluation a sub-plot. Why is

evaluation so important to students? Because students use these plots and sub-plots to shape and write the future stories of their lives.

Students often seem to be caught in the eternal now. Probably it's a function of their age. Maybe it's because young people have a talent for viewing themselves so closely and so harshly. It is sometimes difficult for students to see that they are coming from a past; they are moving forward; they are growing; and they are more able than they once were. It is refreshing for them to pause for a moment and to be shown that, yes, indeed, they were once there and now they are here. Sometimes evaluation can be a cause for little celebrations and the hundreds of little, incremental victories of progress that are made in school as students learn. Evaluation can show students that they have improved.

Reason #4: Reporting and discussing students with parents.

Over the years, schools have changed. Once they were informal, local, and parent controlled. Schools were places where parents were almost ever-present. Today, they are generally operated at arms length from parents. And, sadly and too often, parents seem estranged from their children's education. They don't always know what is going on in the places where their children spend so much of their lives away from home.

One job of evaluation is to create opportunities for messages to be sent from the teacher and the school to the parents, from the parents to

the school, and vice versa. The most formal evaluation tool is, as mentioned before, the report card. But, certainly, notes from the teacher to the parents can also be important evaluative opportunities -- even if they are informal.

Our teaching experience suggests that teachers should only use as much formality as they need to do the job you want to accomplish. The smallest actions of the teacher can be extremely powerful. For example, making and enforcing a rule that students must introduce the teacher to their parents if they ever meet outside of class helps shape the way a classroom works. Inviting parents to school events or into the class as guest speakers. Sitting with parents at basketball games. Calling to tell them that their child has done something extremely well. These little actions may see simple, but they create extremely effective structures for informal evaluations to flow back and forth between parents and teachers. We encourage teachers to use them.

Reason #5: Evaluation is used to tell students how much they already know.

Many teachers seem to have a negative, punitive view of evaluation. They use evaluation like a big hammer. Evaluation is only useful, they suggest, if it can be used to bludgeon students into submission. But, one positive and useful tool of evaluation is to show students that, yes, they do know something. Much like encouraging self-improvement,

some evaluation can be used to show students that they have learned the material well. Success is a powerful encouragement.

Question #2. What are we evaluating?

Two important aspects of evaluation are the concepts of formative and summative evaluation. Simply, formative evaluation is evaluation that leads to on-sight decision-making. Summative evaluation is evaluation that wraps-up and serves as a final grading of what students have learned after the topic or unit has been completed.

For example, formative evaluation happens when a math teacher wants to know if students are able to understand the concept of dividing fractions before they go on to the next topic. Formative evaluation happens when, in one way or another, the math teacher stops to ask the question: "Can my students divide fractions?" To conduct this formative evaluation, teachers might create a simple evaluation tool that tells them how their students are doing on this one point.

An example of summative evaluation, on the other hand, is the final exam given at the end of the year or at the end of a report card period. In this case, summative evaluation serves as a summary of the knowledge students hold at the end of a unit. Formative evaluation is useful for making decisions; summative evaluation is useful for reporting the final grades that a student should receive for a course of study.

We believe that it's helpful to understand the concepts of formative and summative evaluation. They are simple, clear, and straightforward. However, we have chosen to talk about evaluation in a slightly different manner. We decided that, as important as formative and summative evaluation are, it would be more helpful if we suggested many of the things that teachers might evaluate. We also decided that it might be helpful if we then suggested some of the ways teachers could evaluate these things. The next section gives a brief suggestion of some things teachers might evaluate.

Our answer to the question "What should a teacher evaluate?" is also quite simple. We say, teachers should evaluate everything. Of course, not all of these evaluations are formal. Some may be almost unconscious. But, the fact is, good teachers are always assessing and figuring out what is going on in their classrooms. Good teachers do this because they feel, and are, responsible for the activities that take place where they live and work -- their classroom.

Constant evaluation might seem like an unlikely prospect in teaching, but we believe it holds some merits. First, it suggests that what you ask students to do is important. One of the most common things students ask is "Does this count for marks?" If it doesn't count for marks, they suggest, it won't get done. Students expect evaluation.

A second reason for evaluating often is that, as mentioned before, teachers need to create a lot of "evidence" for a report card grade.

More evaluations gives teachers a better sense and a more accurate perception of what students are doing.

A third reason for evaluating often is that evaluation is like the salt that gives the work that students do a seasoning. Evaluating classroom activity adds a touch of seriousness to what is going on in the classroom. When students know that work is being evaluated, they tend to take school a bit more seriously. For some students, taking school more seriously is good; but, we have also seen students who -- believe it or not -- need to take school less seriously.

Dilemmas of Constant Evaluation

Teachers face at least two potential problems in evaluation. The first potential problem is that students equate evaluation with tests. If students don't have a test, they don't know that they are being evaluated. To many students, an informal evaluation is simply not an evaluation at all. Furthermore, students don't always realize what teachers are doing with evaluation until, in many cases, years later.

The second potential problem is that constant evaluation can become a vicious cycle. Ultimately, the goal of education is to encourage intellectual maturity. One sign of intellectual maturity is the ability to be self-motivated, not simply motivated by external forces like tests. The dilemma is this: if students expect all their work and assignments to be evaluated, to be "marked," they may come to depend more strongly on these marks as encouragement for their learning.

The resulting situation can be tricky. Teachers should work to encourage self-motivation and not simply to force students to respond to external stimuli. Yet, teachers must convince students that the work they are given to do is not trivial. The answer is that students need to be "re-programmed." The move from external motivation -- like tests and other evaluations -- to internal motivation is a slow process, but an important process.

Often, teachers use only exams to evaluate students' progress and work. However, a number of other possible activities might also be evaluated. These other evaluations include student presentations, the physical skills that students display, writing assignments, thinking processes, cooperative skills, and any host of other activities. In short, whatever teachers decide is an important function of the classroom can, and probably should, be evaluated.

Basically, we believe there are four reasons to evaluate. Each of these reasons can be broken down and thought of as an "area" of evaluation. While there are many ways to break evaluation down to study it, we have chosen four basic categories. Like all categories, ours are artificial. We created them to suggest that the task of assessment can be broken down into useful areas. Other categories are probably just as useful as ours. We happen to like these because, basically, they are ours. The areas of evaluation we have chosen to consider are: (1) Assessing knowledge and comprehension, (2) Assessing the

application of skills, (3) Assessing higher level thinking skills (including analysis and synthesis), and (4) Assessing critical thinking.

Question #3: How are we evaluating?

There are many possible ways to evaluate. Some ways include anecdotal records, checklists and charts, conferences, portfolios, tests and quizzes, and evaluations of students' reading, writing, and mathematical skills. Evaluation may be holistic, analytic, primary trait, self-evaluation, etc. The point is that evaluation is more than a test.

In order to help teachers get a sense of how they might evaluate their students' work, we will offer some suggestions in the four areas of evaluation we have set out. These suggestions are not comprehensive. Instead, they are examples of the sorts of non-testing activities teachers may use to evaluate. There are many other evaluation techniques. We encourage teachers to be creative. If they have an idea, try it. If it doesn't work, forget it and try something else. Our own experience suggests that sometimes the best evaluation ideas come from crazy thoughts that come when we are stuck in traffic. Don't forget these crazy thoughts. Sometimes they are not as crazy as you might think.

(1) Assessing knowledge and comprehension.

The task of assessing knowledge and comprehension is to find out how much students know. Many teachers rely solely on quizzes and

tests; however, here some other ideas you might use to assess knowledge and comprehension.

1. Student-created review games [e. g. jeopardy, word search, crossword puzzles]

The purpose of student-created games is to have the students do the teacher's work. There are at least two reasons why having students do the work can be helpful. First, it saves the teacher time. Second, the old saying is that one never learns a thing so well as when one is preparing to teach it. As students do the work of the teacher, they learn more because they are active instead of passive. And, because they are beginning to "think like the teacher." They are breaking things down and putting them back together -- analyzing and synthesizing. Students can and should be involved in creating the puzzles and games themselves. They can be evaluated by their involvement and the quality of the work they complete.

2. Writing Rap Songs: The purpose of having students write "Rap" music is to provide a format where they can collect and present information to one another. The rap music format is almost perfect because the chorus tends to repeat the important concepts and ideas while the verses outline the specific facts. One of the most positive aspects of asking students to put together a rap song is that, to do so, they must go over and over the material again and again to write the lyrics.

A second positive aspect is that most students love to perform. (We have used this idea successfully from elementary schools to university courses.) Once students have put their lyrics and music together, they can perform their song -- either on tape or live. And, because the performances highlight the course content, as other students listen -- teachers may even want to tape the presentations -- they are learning.

(2) Assessing the application of skills.

1. Creating Quality Presentations: There is a difference between presentations that are simply acceptable and first-class presentations. Sometimes something looks really good; sometimes something is really good. Teachers can spend time discussing and creating the criteria for evaluation. Then, they can ask their students to complete the presentation.

We like presentations for a number another reason. Presentations allow the teacher to see students in a different light. In the typical, daily activities of school, students can sit still and wait for the teacher to do all the work. But, a presentation changes the position of the student. When presentations happen, students stand and teachers sit. We believe that students learn more when they are active than when they are still.

2. Completing a Job Application for a Historical or Literary Character

If teachers want students to understand the lives of the people they are studying in your class, whether these people are historical or even literary, they might ask students multiple choice, true or false, or matching questions on an exam. Maybe the more typical way would be to ask your students to write a descriptive paragraph about the people or characters. These are useful ways to evaluate what students know.

However, another way to evaluate student knowledge might be to create a job application form for them to fill out about the person or character they are studying. In filling out any job application form, the person filling out the form must provide information like height and weight, address, background, previous employment, a list of references, and reasons why the applicant would be good at the particular job. This information is also instructive about the person or character. An added benefit would be that when the assignment was completed and the student reviewed the work, they would also gain some insight into how they might better fill out a job application of their own.

(3) Assessing higher level thinking skills (including analysis and synthesis).

1. Portfolios: Basically, a student portfolio is a purposeful collection of a student's work. What makes this collection different from other evaluation types is that the collection usually is created as a result of the student's personal assessment of his or her best work, and is put

together for the purpose of showing effort, progress, and growth to the teacher, to other students, to parents, and to others.

A portfolio is evaluated by assessing student growth. It is an assessment of higher level thinking skills because it includes the student's analysis of work and the synthesis of arranging this work into a collection. Any useful portfolio must include student participation in the selection of the content of the portfolio, an outline of the criteria for making selections for the portfolio, the criteria used for judging the quality of the work in the portfolio, and evidence that the student has thought about and can give reasons for placing material in the portfolio.

2. Writing newspapers or newspaper articles: A simple way to assess higher level thinking skills like analysis and synthesis is to ask students to create a alternative format for organizing the content they are studying. One alternative format is the newspaper.

For example, if students are studying Newtonian physics in science, or Brazil in social studies, or Hamlet in language arts, or fractions in math, they could put what they know about the topic together into a newspaper format. They could write articles for the paper in which each student presents a different aspect of the content. In writing these articles, they could create characters, add events, and even create ads or cartoons. Without stretching the format much, one could even do an Ann Landers' column about the use of fractions. In creating

this newspaper, higher level thinking skills would naturally be addressed.

(4) Assessing critical thinking.

1. Students decide goals: Generally, teachers decide what is important in the classroom and how the classroom should be run. Making decisions is a primary task of the teacher. However, simply because deciding, organizing, and goal-setting are necessary teacher tasks doesn't mean that the teacher **always** must be the primary decider, organizer, and goal-setter for the classroom.

Sometimes, students can set their own goals and work to meet them. Setting goals requires both creative and critical thought. It also requires a sense of evaluation of what is important and what is not. It requires time management and it requires organizing a way to assess whether goals have been met at the end of the work.

2. Students becoming the teacher: There is an old saying among teachers that "You never learn so much as when you prepare to teach." We believe this saying is true. But, what also makes the saying important for teachers is that it suggests a possible teaching strategy that can help improve students' critical thinking. Let them become the teacher for awhile.

In preparing to teach the class, and by this teaching we mean more than simply a short presentation, students in groups will plan an

entire class period, will organize and create materials, will work on directions to their peers, will teach the content or skills, and will evaluate what their peers have learned. During the time the students are acting as teachers, the teacher will become a student -- certainly a more relaxing position in the classroom.

Journals, Conferences, and Presentations as Methods of Evaluation

1. Journal writing

Thoughts, no matter how terrific, can be fleeting. It's difficult for anyone to remember and make sense of all the thoughts that fly through a brain in a day, especially students. Students need a place to gather their thoughts and a time to consider their learning.

Journals, or learning logs, are a valid way of giving students a time and a place to record their thinking, to question their own thoughts and the thoughts of others, to extend their ideas and to make connections with the ideas of other people. Journals also encourage students to foster good habits -- habits like thinking about their reading, writing about their ideas, taking risks. Journals are safe places to risk asking questions, to make judgments, and to outline visions. They are a good place to begin to make meaningful conversation.

Journals can take various formats. Some of these formats include reader response notebooks, dialogue journals, and learning logs. They can allow students to reread their earlier thoughts and view their own

progress or misunderstandings. Journals encourage connections and extend thinking, allowing for the creation of new ideas that may span more than one subject area. They may provide the kernel of an idea for an extended project or activity.

Using journal writing as a method of assessment is not difficult. However, if teachers are to use journals successfully with their students, it is important to realize that journal writing happens quickly and that the meaning of the words is usually more important than the grammar and punctuation. While it is important for teachers to instruct their students so that they might become more polished writers, to demand accuracy to the exclusion of meaning holds the potential of slowing down, or even putting a halt to, the writing process.

2. Conferencing

One efficient and direct way to gain information about students' understandings and progress is to ask them to talk about it. It may be time -consuming for the teacher to conference with each student on an individual basis, but these conferences can provide valuable information about the student and even about the teacher. If there is one thing to understand about students as people is that they are, in fact, people. Teachers may not see these people in the panorama of their classes, because individuals can melt into students. But, as teachers speak with their students, they come to know them better and better.

Conferences can be brief and informal. They can take place on the fly, as you walk around your class checking on individual student work. Or, conferences may be structured in more formal ways. Informal conferences are easier to manage time-wise. Still, formal conferences have the advantage of having a direct focus. Our experience is that students usually appreciate directness. This direct focus can allow for thoughtful input on the part of the students.

The questions teachers ask students in a conference can provide information about students' work from their own points of view. The focus questions teachers write as they prepare for these conferences provide a basis from which teachers might begin to discuss the students' work, either work in progress or work that is completed. In formal conferences about completed work, students can also have input about the future directions of their work (setting goals, for example) and into the grading process that the teacher has set out. We have found that conversations with students about the system of grading we use are always helpful. We also have gained insight and instruction from students and, we believe, have used students' input to construct grading ideas that are more fair and understandable to their students.

In addition to teacher and student conferences, peer conferences (student with student) can be used. Students can discuss each others' work using questions provided by the teachers or questions decided by large group class discussion. When students gain the ability to

create their own questions and comments, teachers will know that learning has taken place. Working with another student partner also has the advantage of helping each student improve his or her work. Peer conferencing benefits both partners by helping them establish criteria for their work and by helping them become more critical readers and listeners.

3. Student Presentations

There are many types of presentations students might do. Some that we have used include oral and video taped presentations, or even puppet shows. We have seen a variety of successful ideas used by teachers. Some include role-playing Shakespeare, creating historical drama, news reports, Oprah Winfrey Shows, writing scripts, doing newscasts, conducting man and woman on the street interviews, using audio-tapes for reading plays, writing rap songs to review historical events, and using final projects instead than exams. We also encourage the use of technology, like videos, so that students can self-evaluate their work.

By student presentations, we mean first-class, well-worked-out presentations. We have seen students work together creatively and rigorously, getting ready to present their own idea for a new radio station to the Canadian Radio and Television Corporation (CRTC). We have seen them learn about how federal decisions are made, and how to put together a first-class proposal to a governmental organization, and how to interact with others with tolerance and without rudeness.

One of the most interesting things about student presentations is that teachers can often come to see a different side to students as they present. As teachers, we have often asked ourselves after watching a presentation, either live or on tape, where some of these people have been hiding. Certainly, we have never seen this creative, and often "wild and crazy," side to our students' personalities. The year is almost over, and we still see facets of our students that we have missed. We believe that as teachers we do not constrain and we hope that we did not stifle; still, the presentation format allows us to see and to assess a different side of our students -- a side we have come to appreciate.

A Final Word

Evaluation is more than tests and quizzes. It provides an opportunity to see our students in a variety of different and important ways; and, if we devaluate well, we can help our students grow and mature. We encourage teachers to try a variety of different ideas for assessment. In this article, we have only given a few ideas. Certainly, we have not covered the issue.

How teachers evaluate is for them to work out as they teach. We encourage teachers to actively think about what they do as teachers and to choose evaluation and assessment activities that bring out the best in students. We also believe that a teacher's attitude about assessment and evaluation is even more important than the methods they use. We encourage teachers to try new ideas. Some will work and

some won't. If teachers do find things that work, we encourage them to go one extra step by sharing what they have learned with another teacher. In this way, teachers can learn to assess their own work -- the sign of a maturing professional.